

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PC-01 AID-05 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 CIAE-00

INR-07 NSAE-00 IGA-02 OMB-01 NSC-05 /052 W

----- 062656

R 050900Z OCT 76

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WAHDC 5924

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 3720

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: EAID, CE

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE INVITATION FROM SRI LANKA TO ACTION/PEACE CORPS

REF: STATE 245616

1. AS FAR AS EMBASSY IS AWARE , ARIYARATNE/SARVODAYA ARE CURRENTLY IN GOOD STANDING WITH THE GSL. FOLLOWING QUESTIONS RAISED BY JUSTICE MINISTER FELIX DIAS BANDARANAIKE IN 1974, SARVODAYA WAS GIVEN CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH BY PRIME MINISTER BANDARANAIKE AND NO CONTROVERSY HAS ARISEN SINCE THAT TIME.

2. REGARDING POSSIBLE PROGRAM COOPERATION BETWEEN ACTION AND SARVODAYA, BELIEVE WE MUST START FROM THE FACT THAT THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT (GSL) TOOK THE INITIATIVE TO TERMINATE THE PEACE CORPS AGREEMENT IN 1970. UNLESS THE GSL IS WILLING TO PUBLICLY GO ON RECORD, EITHER FORMALLY OR INFORMALLY, THAT IT WOULD LIKE AN ACTION/PEACE CORPS PROGRAM REVIVED, THE EMBASSY BELIEVES ANY USG INITIATIVE TO START A PROGRAM IN SRI LANKA WOULD BE COUNTER-PRODUCTIVE. AS THE GSL INSISTS THAT ALL ASISTANCE FROM FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS BE CHANNELED THROUGH IT, THERE IS NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW THAN THE REQUIREMENT SET FORTH ABOVE. CERTAINLY ANY ATTEMPT TO ARRANGE A DIRECT CONNECTION WITH SARVODAYA AND CIRCUMVENT THE GSL WOULD AROUSE SUSPICIONS AND BE DAMAGING TO US-SRI LANKA RELATIONS. SHOULD SARVODAYA
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OR SOME OTHER SRI LANKAN ORGANIZATION BE SUCCESSFUL IN

CONVINCING THE GSL TO REVIVE AN ACTION/PEACE CORPS
PROGRAM (WHICH WE BELIEVE IS HIGHLY UNLIKELY UNDER THE
PRESENT SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT) WE WOULD THEN BE
WILLING TO GIVE FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO POSSIBLE
PROGRAMS AT THAT TIME.
REED

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